

help find employment. He did so and is now employed at Bosma Enterprises. Kevin says that the instruction he received taught him "to live on his own and to have a whole new outlook."

Kevin is not alone, earlier this year I was able to visit Crossroads Industrial Services and see firsthand the impact of the AbilityOne Program on not only its employees, but also the impact it has on our men and women in uniform. Crossroads employees are responsible for producing items that our service members rely on, like ballistic helmet pad sets, combat identification panels, and rocket launcher spare parts. It is with these important contributions that Crossroads, like Bosma, exemplifies the quality of work and determination to enhance the lives of disabled Americans that make the AbilityOne Program so invaluable.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I extend my support to the AbilityOne Program. I also want to commend the dedication and commitment to Jim Vento of Easter Seals Crossroads, Lou Moneymaker of Bosma Industries, and their staffs, for helping individuals who are blind or have a significant disability find employment. The impact of their work and that of each AbilityOne employee has an undeniably positive impact on our community.

IN RECOGNITION OF REVEREND
MARVIN McMICKLE, PH.D.

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Reverend Marvin McMickle and congratulate him on his retirement after twenty-four years of service as the pastor of Antioch Baptist Church in Cleveland, Ohio. Rev. McMickle will become the president at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School.

Rev. McMickle was born in 1948 in Chicago, Illinois. He was ordained as a reverend in New York City in 1973. Rev. McMickle served as the pastor of St. Paul Baptist Church in Montclair, New Jersey and as the associate pastor for the Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York City prior to becoming the pastor of Antioch Baptist Church in Cleveland, Ohio in 1987.

In addition to being a staple in Cleveland's spiritual community, Rev. McMickle is also a major influence in academia and politics. He earned his undergraduate degree from Aurora College, a Master of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary, a Doctor of Ministry degree from Princeton Theological Seminary and a doctorate in philosophy from Case Western Reserve University. Over the years, Rev. McMickle has taught at several colleges and universities including Ashland Theological Seminary, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland State University, Fordham, Princeton and spent a semester as a visiting professor at Yale University.

Rev. McMickle has served as president of Shaker Heights School Board and Montclair Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He has also served on the boards of Greater Cleveland Roundtable, United Pastors in Mis-

sion, Urban League of Greater Cleveland, Gateway Economic Development Committee and United Way Services of Greater Cleveland.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in thanking Rev. Marvin McMickle for more than two decades of leadership and service to the congregation of Antioch Baptist Church and residents of Cleveland. I wish him luck in his new position.

INTRODUCING WHITE HOUSE CON-
FERENCE ON HAITI ACT OF 2011

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2011

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the White House Conference on Haiti Act of 2011. This important piece of legislation would call on the President of the United States to convene a White House Conference on Haiti within the next calendar year.

As we are all well aware, in January of last year, a 7.0 magnitude earthquake rocked the already struggling nation of Haiti. Approximately three million people were affected and 230,000 are estimated to have died. Those who survived continue to face unimaginable conditions with a crumbling infrastructure and recurring Cholera outbreaks.

If there is a silver lining to this unimaginable tragedy, it is that out of this, the Haitian people have been given the incredible opportunity to right the wrongs of the past and rebuild their nation stronger than ever before. Millions of dollars in aid have flooded into the country and thousands of aid organizations are committed to building a sustainable recovery.

Immediately following the earthquake, we all witnessed countless foreign governments and aid organizations pledging to stand with Haiti, and I have been inspired by the countless individuals throughout the globe who have donated their talents and services to the recovery and the many more who are eager to help, but simply don't know how.

We cannot let this opportunity go to waste. However, with the possibility to do good comes the very real possibility of waste, duplication, and inefficiencies in the rebuilding and recovery process.

Under this bill, the major stakeholders in the rebuilding, along with other interested parties, will come together to share their knowledge and best practices and identify gaps in the recovery process. It is my hope that out of this Conference, opportunities for collaboration and coordination in projects big and small will emerge.

The Conference will also highlight innovative ideas for rebuilding and redevelopment in Haiti. From inexpensive hurricane and earthquake proof housing and green building techniques to sustainable economic practices and urban development. There are countless companies and individuals who have developed groundbreaking concepts in response to this tragedy, but they have yet to be connected with those who can put these ideas into practices or with others pursuing similar goals who may be able to improve upon their initiatives. Innovation does not happen in a bubble; great things can happen when great minds come together.

Further, Haitians living abroad are eager to help their brothers and sisters in Haiti, but many simply do not know where to begin. The White House Conference on Haiti will tap the immense resource that is the Haitian Diaspora by bringing their abilities together with those who are in a position to use them.

Most importantly however, the White House Conference on Haiti will help ensure that the challenges facing the Haitian people remain in the public eye and in the minds of all Americans.

While the United States has been instrumental in the recovery and rebuilding from countless natural and man-made disasters throughout the world, few international tragedies have had as deep an impact on the United States, and particularly the State of Florida, as this one.

Helping our Haitian neighbors is not only the right thing to do; it is also in our own nation's best interests. Just a stone's throw from our shores, instability in Haiti impacts our own economy and immigration levels.

Our nation's rapid, comprehensive response, from our government down to everyday Americans, has been commendable, but the President and this administration are in a position to do more. This legislation would not be a costly endeavor, but could stand to save millions of dollars that could be used to improve the lives of the Haitian people for generations to come.

At a time of continued instability and crisis, the United States must do all within its power to help ensure a long-term sustainable recovery for Haiti.

I ask my colleagues to support this legislation and urge the House Leadership to bring it swiftly to the House floor for consideration.

IN HONOR OF RADIO STATION
KZRG'S RESPONSE TO THE JOP-
LIN TORNADO

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2011

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the service of one of the 7th District of Missouri's radio stations, KZRG.

KZRG is an AM radio station broadcasting from Joplin, Missouri that does news broadcasting for Missouri, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Kansas, or as they call it, "the four state" area.

On May 22, 2011, an EF-5 tornado struck Joplin, Missouri, devastating a once quiet Missouri town. On that Sunday evening, Joplin was forever changed. Much was destroyed. Family, friends, neighbors, homes and businesses disappeared in the blink of a tornado's eye. After the winds stilled, over 160 people, 8,000 homes and 500 businesses were lost.

The early days were tough. Shock and disbelief, chaos and devastation, but out of that wreckage came hope and inspiration. We found out there are a lot of heroes in Joplin. During those dark hours they stood up and came to the aid of their community when their neighbors needed them most. There is no better example of that than the associates at KZRG.

Despite the fact that seven KZRG associates lost homes during the tornado, despite

seeing their town in ruins, despite the horror and devastation of one of the most destructive tornados in American history, KZRG continued to broadcast and report, 24 hours a day, on-air and in the field.

The tornado's widespread devastation damaged or destroyed much of Joplin's cell phone towers and phone and electrical lines. This left much of the community powerless and unable to communicate. However, the radio broadcasts of KZRG continued. KZRG remained on air, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, giving folks critical and time-sensitive information as it was happening. KZRG was there, helping the police dispatch their officers, helping loved ones find each other, helping community leaders coordinate disaster recovery efforts. Truly, journalism at its finest.

They also launched a relief collection effort, which collected food, clothing, and toiletry items to listeners in need. In fact, their station became a meeting place of sorts, for emergency personnel and volunteers. They became a symbol of the community getting back on its feet.

Folks in Southwest Missouri should be proud to know that in times of trouble, KZRG was and will always be there. I too am proud and honored to call the associates of KZRG my fellow citizens and neighbors in the 7th Congressional District of Missouri.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1540, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today I voted against the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (NDAA). While nothing is more important than providing the resources needed to keep America and our men and women in uniform safe, this authorization spends too much and is a missed opportunity for much needed reform.

First, however, I would like to thank Chairman McKEON and Ranking Member SMITH of the House Armed Services Committee for including elements of all three of my amendments in this final conference bill. One amendment lifts the veil on classified immunity for defense contractors, a practice that exposed 36 of our Oregon National Guardsmen to toxic chemicals in Iraq. The other two will help protect our troops on the battlefield and save billions of dollars through energy efficiency initiatives. Their inclusion, however, does not offset the overall authorization which fails to reflect America's priorities or our national security realities.

It is deeply unfortunate that this legislation includes the appalling detention provisions and that the bill continues to tie the President's hands by restricting his ability to transfer detainees to the United States for trial in Federal Court are appalling. Preventing the administration from closing Guantanamo only serves to bolster Al Qaeda and erode America's security. There is no excuse—even in the name of fighting terrorism—for undermining our ideals. Beyond the practical security considerations, terrorism is an assault on those ideals and we

should not further erode them in response to that threat.

One thing that most of the Occupy Wall Street and majority of the Tea Party advocates agree upon is that the United States is on an unsustainable path.

The economy is still floundering. We are losing the competition with other countries in the international arena when it comes to rebuilding and renewing America's infrastructure and making advances in education. Even our health care system, improved by the Affordable Care Act, still falls short of the systems in use by most of our major European competitors.

These glaring examples of un-sustainability for our infrastructure, our education system and our health care system are all troubling. None of this, however, compares with the un-sustainability of our massive defense and security spending. U.S. defense spending is bloated and not strategically oriented. We cannot continue to spend almost as much as the rest of the world—friend and foe alike—combined. We spend 6 times as much on defense as China, and 12 times that of Russia. Our Navy is larger than the next 13 navies combined.

People who are at the front deserve our best in terms of equipment, and they and their families need to be well-cared for, not just in the field, but when they come home. Our armed forces are stressed and continue to be hobbled by the reckless actions in Iraq and further challenged by the war in Afghanistan, and need to come home. We continue to spend in Afghanistan with no clear plan for withdrawal.

Today we have a reauthorization of the defense bill that fails to lay the foundation for the dramatic changes that are needed. Scaling back our open-ended spending commitments, nuclear weapons systems that we spend more on today than during the Cold War and are far more out of proportion to what we will ever need or use, patterns of deployment, for example, with our Navy, all cry out for reform. Long overdue elements to deal with cost effectiveness and the environmental footprint, energy costs at \$400 a gallon for fuel at the frontlines in Afghanistan, and tens of billions of dollars lost to inefficient air conditioning are missing.

The greatest threat to our future is losing control of our ability to make tough decisions that will enable us to sustain our military and, more importantly, to sustain the economy. In short, the NDAA ignores the big picture.

We should reject this blueprint and begin the process now of right-sizing the military, trimming our burdensome nuclear stockpiles and unnecessary programs, eliminating costly weapons programs, ending our misguided mission in Afghanistan, and moving away from a Cold War model of deployment with U.S. military bases all over Europe.

We have the most powerful military in the world and will by far even if we invest substantially less. Our problem is that the American public is being ill-served by government. We're not investing in our future, and our economy will not be able to sustain this ever-increasing military commitment, to say nothing of the demands of investing in our communities and our people, especially the young. This is another missed opportunity to set down a marker for real change, and to lead responsibly.

THANKING BILL HARRIS

HON. MAC THORNBERRY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2011

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, each Member of this body is assisted by those who serve on our staffs. The roles and responsibilities of a Member of Congress make it impossible for any one individual to do it all. It takes a team.

Today I wish to recognize and express appreciation to a key member of my team as he retires from official public service.

Bill Harris has served as my Chief of Staff and then Senior Counselor since 2004. But his service to the country began in 1968 as a member of U.S. Army Signal Corps and his service to the Congress began in 1972, when he took a job as a staff assistant to Congressman Mike McCormack of Washington State. Earning his law degree from Georgetown, he was Congressman McCormack's Counsel until 1976.

Between his stints with the Congress, Bill worked for the Atomic Industrial Forum, the Committee for Energy Awareness, the U.S. Council for Energy Awareness (which is now the Nuclear Energy Institute), and the University Research Alliance. In each of these positions, Bill's focus was energy and the tremendous possibilities that can come from nuclear research and development.

In 2004, I enticed Bill back into government service to serve as my Chief of Staff. He led my team by helping each staff member develop his or her talents and interests to grow and serve the people of the 13th district. His expertise in energy and in management, as well as his background in the law, were invaluable. But, perhaps most importantly has been his character and strong, steady leadership.

Too few individuals possess the modesty that puts the good of the organization and the mission ahead of any personal considerations. Yet some of the strongest leaders and those with the most to say are those persons of character whose soft-spoken demeanor quiets the noise with intellect, honesty, and sound judgment. Bill is just such a leader.

He has helped ensure that we made decisions based on the concerns of the people in Texas, not how policy in Washington should control the lives of people back home. No matter what the task, my staff and I counted on Bill's guidance and sense of duty to the people we represent.

Of course, Bill's commitment to service goes beyond his profession. He spends his free time engaging with all corners of the community. For example, he is currently a Mission Pilot with the Civil Air Patrol, a long-serving board member of the Harrington Cancer Center of Amarillo, and a member of the Amarillo Chamber of Commerce Executive Committee. But that is just a sampling. Over the years, Bill and wonderful wife Bev have become fixtures in the community when it comes to serving others and the community as a whole. Bill has been on more committees and organizational projects than anyone could count.

President Reagan put a premium on principle-based leadership. He kept a small plaque on his desk in the Oval Office with a quote that read, "There is no limit to what a man can do or where he can go if he does not